



Take a Moment to Pray for Peace! **A Spark**

Lord, the list of needs in our world is long and overwhelming. We feel so helpless! We also have needs of our own. Sometimes dealing with our own needs can be all consuming and leave us with little interest or motivation to consider the needs of someone else, especially the needs of a stranger. Looking out for number one can be a full-time job when we are in crisis mode. However, it is easy to forget that just looking out for number one can actually make our own situation worse or appear far worse than it is when we focus on nothing else. Alone, it is harder to see options and easier to lose sight of hope. When we take the time and trouble to look beyond ourselves; to see and understand the needs of others; we may find that our own needs seem smaller by comparison. If our own struggles help breed empathy in us for the struggles of others, we may find we are not as alone as we thought. When we join it with the voices of others, we may find our voice is stronger than we thought. We may also find there are options we had been blind to. The simple act of reaching out with loving concern to someone else may be a reminder to both parties how powerful being acknowledged and heard can be. That may give us the courage to use our voices to seek change and help for those in need. Sometimes that small spark can become the beginning that changes everything!

This week, in your prayer time remember:

- **Nigerian Hunger Crisis.** 2.6 million people, more than half of them children, have been displaced by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad region (which includes parts of Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad, and Niger). UNICEF reports that 50,000 Nigerian Children may die of malnutrition if they do not receive aid. (Contributions to the Nigerian Crisis Fund through the Church is one way to help. See <http://www.brethren.org/nigeriacrisis/> for details.)
- **Nigerian Violence Continues** – 30 people were killed in a Boko Haram attack February 9th in the Borno region. The violence continues.
- **German Shooting Victims** – 10 people were killed in Hanau Germany. The victims were of middle eastern decent. Nearly half were also German citizens. The German gunman also killed his mother and himself.
- **Those facing persecution for their moral stands, defense of the rule of law, or defense of the common good.**
- **Those facing the coronavirus** – those sick and those trying to stop it. At least 27 countries have now reported cases.
- **Syrian Refugees.** Since December 900,000 people, mostly women and children, have fled their homes in freezing conditions. Some children have frozen to death. The war there is now 9 years old. The Syrian government with Russia's help, is bombing civilians relentlessly. Neighboring countries are refusing to take more refugees so the people are homeless with nowhere to go.
- **Venezuela** – The country's economy and infrastructure are in shambles. People are dying due to lack of food and adequate healthcare



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